Utility of Pramana in Ayurveda – A Review

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Authors’ contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda has inculcated many principles from darshana shastra. Pramana is one such principle which is widely used in Ayurveda with certain modifications in its applicability. With the keen observation and analytical skill the ancient sages identified the pramana as the tool to gain thorough knowledge. Ayurveda has adopted pramana namely aptopadesha, pratyaksha, anumana, yukti along with other types. The word pramana and pariksha are used synonymous in Ayurveda. Systematical analysis and gaining the exact knowledge is pariksha. Vast application of these can be seen in the treatises. Thus a literary review is taken up as an attempt to understand the utility of pramana in Ayurveda with respect to understand the basic concepts, field of research, diagnosis and treatment of disease is done.

Keywords: Aptomadesha; anumana; pariksha; pramana; pratyaksha; yukti.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Ancient India is the abode of the intellectuals and great thinkers. Their keen observations and analytical skills at gross and subtle level, lead to compose treatises on complex subjects in the absence of sophisticated instruments with accuracy. Ayurveda physicians of the past established the tools of knowledge i.e. pramana which proved to be an excellent tool to gain knowledge then and even now. Thus, the ancient physicians, with their high levels of intelligence, and extra ordinary skills of observation, and interpretation achieved intellectual phenomenon with the help of pramana.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Literary review from Ayurveda samhita namely Charaka Samhita & Sushruta Samhita.

2.1 Literary Review

Pramana is a tool through which true knowledge is gained. It has several synonyms like upalabdhithi, sadhana (tool), jnana (knowledge), pariksha (evaluation) [1]. The word pramana and pariksha are used synonymous in Ayurveda. The term pariksha has been defined as systematical analysis and gaining the pratipatti jnana (exact knowledge). Aptopadesha, pratyaksha, anumana and yukti are the fourfold examination techniques mentioned in Charaka Samhita. Whereas in Sushruta Samhita, the pratyaksha, aptopadesha, anumana and upamana are mentioned as pramana. Apart from these, arthapatti, abhava, aithya, sambhava, cheshta, parisheshia are also considered in different contexts. A few references for pramanal pariksha is found in bruhatrayi in the contexts of proving the paraloka[2], examination of disease and diseased [3,4,5,6], tools to gain knowledge[7,8].

Aptomadesha are the tarka rahita (doubtless), nischay (definite), yathartha jnana (absolute knowledge) provided by the aptas[9], also considered as agama i.e., Veda[10] (knowledge). The knowledge that arises of the combined effort and interaction between the artha (object), indriya (sense organ), manas (mind) and atma (soul) at that moment is called as pratyaksha. Anumana is the inferential knowledge based on valid information with previously perceived knowledge (pratyaksha) with the help of yukti and tarka. The inferential knowledge that one arrives after a careful introspection of various cohesive factors is defined as yukti[11]. The knowledge gained by comparing an unknown object with known is called as upamana [12]. The relevant hidden and unexplained meaning through the mentioned reference can be obtained through arthapatthi pramana[13]. If one statement is placed, certain other relevant references are also understood which are the part of the former is considered as sambhava [14]. The knowledge of absence or non existence is obtained through abhava pramana. Cheshta pramana is the tool to elicit through the different expressions, movements and postures.

3. DISCUSSION

Pratyaksha and anumana are the bifold examination for a scholarly person. For others aptopadesha with the above two constitute the methods of examination; by incorporating all these, conclusion can be drawn through yukti pramana. Ayurveda has inculcated many principles from darshana shastra. Pramana is one such principle which is widely used in Ayurveda with certain modification in its applicability. Ayurveda emphasize on Trividha pramana viz. pratyaksha, anumana and aptopadesha and all others can be subsudated in these three as aithya pramana under aptopadesha pramana, upamana pramana under pratyaksha and anumana, sambhava, abhava, arthapatti under anumana pramana; abhava pramana under pratyaksha pramana. Several pramana quoted in darshana are considered in Ayurveda in different context as depicted in (Table 01).

3.1 Understanding of the Basic Concepts of Ayurveda and its Application

Ayurveda is an agama shastra in the form of trisutra. Aptomadesha is the base for all other pramana, it is the authentic source of practical knowledge and application. Loka purusha samya siddhanta, similarity is present in the universe and physical body, based on this the aggravation and depletion of the body contents can be corrected. In punarbhava nirupana it is inferred as the action performed in the previous life called as daiva are unavoidable, eternal and has continuity. Its result corresponds to the action, which is the causative factor for the karmaja vyadhie. Adharma is considered as the root cause for the janapadodhamsa vyadhie [15]. The understanding of epidemic and pandemic diseases can be attributed to all these pramana. Assessment of Ayu (lifespan) is based on the anguli pramana (anthropometry) [16,17] in svastha (healthy) and arishta lakshana in rogi
3.2 Examination of Disease and Diseased

Trividha and ashtavidha rogi pariksha (examination of patient), confirms their roots in the pramana. Darshana and sparshana incorporates pratyaksha, whereas prashna incorporates aptopadesha. The physical and psychological states are assessed by anumana pramana. Clinical utility of these, is explained in an elaborated manner in trividha roga vishesha vijnaniya adhiyaya of Charaka Samhita.

Roga pariksha (diagnosis) is based on nidana panchaka which depends on pramana. The diagnosis, prognosis, planning and assessment of treatment are based on trividha pramana. Before arriving at a conclusion with regard to diagnosis or treatment of a disease, it is essential to contemplate on the teachings of the seers as it helps in gaining the exact knowledge[21]. Aptomadesha pramana guides in identifying the anukta vyadhi through nidana, adhishtana and svabhava of roga. Considering the patient as apta, prashna pariksha identifies the subjective state of health or disease[22]. The diagnosis and estimation of the prognosis is done through pratyaksha pramana eg. haridra varna in kamala, gurghuraka shabda in tamaka shvasa, puti puya gandha in vrana, sheeta, karkasha etc. sparsha in shotha. Anumana pramana helps in diagnosing a disease based on purvarupa, complications and fatal signs and symptoms. Rasanendriya pariksha is attributed through anumana pramana which helps in assessing arishtha lakshana in certain diseases by observation of whether the insects like makshika, yuka etc. gets attracted towards the sample of urine, body parts etc[23]. Yukt pramana is a tool for assessment of kriyakala (stages of diseases), fixing time and dose of medicine. Identification of diseases like kushta, visarpa, bhagandara, prameha pidaka are classified based on dosha’s are named by giving simile of different fruits or parts of animals, eg. rishyajihwa, ushtragreeva, etc.) Identifying the nature of disease like the swelling in kroshhtuka shirsha vyadhi is similar to head of an animal called kroshhtuka. In gradhrasi vata the gait will be similar to that of gradhra (vulture). In understanding effectiveness of treatment like eranda taila is compared to kesari in treating the amavata which is like gajendra. Yukti, aptomadesha are the vital aids necessary for arriving at a precise diagnosis and effective treatment strategy.

3.3 Understanding the Research Methodology

There are several references of research protocol in classics, like identification of drugs, disease (anukta vyadh), survey study, clinical research in the form of several formulations to one disease and single formulation for many diseases, animal studies like anna raksha vidhi. Scope for survey and observational studies are highlighted eg., excess use of kshara, lavana, pippali; viruddha ahara etc. thus aptomadesha pramana is useful in selecting the topic and identifying the solution. In the field of research pratyaksha and yuki pramana plays a pivotal role along with anumana pramana which helps in designing the protocol to preparation of the report. Drug, clinical, experimental researches are mainly based on yuki and pratyaksha. Survey studies, analysis of the pharmacodynamics of the drug are based on anumana pramana. Entire research can be explained with parartha anumana using pancha avayava vavya.

3.4 Utility of other pramana in Ayurveda with its Clinical Application

Arthapathi pramana can be considered in understanding upashaya (relief) and anupashaya (aggregation). The formation of upadhatu like stanyya and artava from rasa dhatu and assessing the rasa dhatu dushti in the diseases of artava and stanya; manifestation of vyadhi due to nidana sevana can be considered under sambhava pramana. Abhava (non-availability) of certain signs and symptoms helps in differential diagnosis and final diagnosis. Vyadhi mukta lakshana like in jvara, unmada, atisara[24] etc. The ayoga of indriyarth, karma and kala are considered as causative factors for disease. These suggest the utility of abhava pramana. Cheshta is considered as the method to diagnose the disease through expression and actions. It helps in diagnosis of sharirika and manasika vyadhi. eg. bhihbatsa ceshtha (involuntary movement) along with the feature of loss of memory and darkness can be observed in apasmara, cardinal feature of sanyasa, arishta lakshana can be understood as in unmada. Activities like frequent touching of painful body parts by the child[25] suggest certain pediatric illness.
Table 1. Contexts of different pramana in samhita

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Sl.</th>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Utility</th>
<th>Pramana</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Vada Marga</td>
<td>Tools to gain knowledge</td>
<td>aitihya, pratyaksha, anumana, sambhava, arthapathi, upamana,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Tantrayukt</td>
<td>Understanding Text</td>
<td>arthapatti</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Differential diagnosis</td>
<td>Understanding the disease</td>
<td>chesta, abhava</td>
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4. CONCLUSION

Thus all the pramana play an important role in fulfilling the need of Ayurveda to maintain the heath, diagnosis and treatment of the diseases and attain the chaturvidha purushartha in the form of:

a. Pariksha to understand the triskandha of Ayurveda which are hetu, linga and aushadha.
b. Tantrayukt to understand the tantra.c. Tattva jnana to establish the facts like punarbhava
d. To plan and performing research.

The ancient concept of evidence is based on fourfold testing, called pramana. However, it must be emphasized that fruitful strategies for developing new scientific evidence cannot succeed if traditional primary evidence is ignored. New research and understanding of the new diseases and its treatment is to be planned on the foundations of existing textual and experience-based evidence.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study highlights the efficacy of "PRAMANA" which is an ancient tradition, used in some parts of India. This ancient concept should be carefully evaluated in the light of modern medical science and can be utilized partially if found suitable.

DISCLAIMER

The products used for this research are commonly and predominantly use products in our area of research and country. There is absolutely no conflict of interest between the authors and producers of the products because we do not intend to use these products as an avenue for any litigation but for the advancement of knowledge. Also, the research was not funded by the producing company rather it was funded by personal efforts of the authors.

CONSENT

It is not applicable.

ETHICAL APPROVAL

It is not applicable.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

REFERENCES